

**Joint Meeting:**  
**YADKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**YADKIN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**September 29, 2008**

The Yadkin County Board of Commissioners met in Joint Session with the Yadkin County Board of Education on Monday, September 29, 2008 at 6:00 p.m., in the Media Center of Jonesville Elementary School, Jonesville, North Carolina. The Yadkin County Board of Education was the host for today's meeting. A meal was provided.

Present for the meeting:

**Representing the Board of Commissioners**

Chair Kim Clark Phillips  
Vice Chairman Joel Cornelius  
Commissioner Brady Wooten  
Commissioner Tommy Garner  
Commissioner Chad Wagoner

**Yadkin County Personnel**

Stan Kiser, County Manager  
Gina Brown, Clerk to the Board

**Representing the Board of Education**

Vice Chairman Howard McKnight  
Rex Baity  
Dr. Hazel Brown  
Diane Hampton  
Joe Dezern  
Larry Vestal

**Yadkin County School Personnel**

Dr. Jim Benfield, Superintendent  
Gary McDonald, Assistant Superintendent  
Mark Rumley, Assistant Superintendent  
Donald Hawks, Director of Maintenance  
Kim Rose, Secretary to Superintendent  
Christine Bryant  
Bonnie Cook  
Kathy Hughes  
Annette Johnson  
Sara McCall  
Cindy McMurray  
Rick Swaim

Candidates for Yadkin County Commissioner, Kevin Austin and Kevin Thomas, were also in attendance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

by Chair Phillips for Board of Commissioners and Vice Chair McKnight for Board of Education at 6:35pm.

**INVOCATION**

by Gary McDonald, Assistant Superintendent of Yadkin County Schools.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

led by Vice Chair of the BOE, Howard McKnight

**WELCOME**

Vice Chair Howard McKnight, led today's meeting in absence of Chair Frank Brown. Vice Chair McKnight welcomed the Board and various school personnel to today's meeting. Vice Chair McKnight acknowledged what an important time this is for Yadkin County with new middle schools under construction. Vice Chair McKnight noted his appreciation for this Yadkin County Board of Commissioners and their interest in the betterment of Yadkin County children.

BOC Chair Kim Phillips introduced new County Manager, Stan Kiser. Introductions of all attendees followed.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **[Board of Education Agenda Attached as Addendum A]**

#### **■ CLASS SIZE**

Dr. Benfield had completed research regarding class size and the effect on a child's school success. The research indicates that students in classrooms of 15 students or less tend to reach higher achievement levels. However, Dr. Benfield stated that class size is not the only factor. Other factors include teaching methods and curriculum. The State maximum class size for each grade level is as follows:

K-3 - 24 students

4-9 - 29 students

10-12 - 32 students

Currently, Yadkin County Schools has class-size waivers for all grades 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. The State does not issue waivers for grades Kindergarten through Third. Dr. Benfield remarked that improving the teacher to student ratio requires a long-term commitment on the part of the Board of Commissioners to continue to fund the additional teaching positions. Also, these class-size adjustments would need to be complete in one phase or else the effectiveness would be lost. Based on '08-'09 data, Yadkin County Schools would require 15 K-3 teachers, 1 7-8 teacher, and 3 9-12 teachers in order to reduce class sizes to 18 or less. Salary plus benefits are estimated at \$50,000 per teacher. Current professional development funds are \$450,000 with only \$40,000 in local dollars. An increase in professional development funds would also be required.

Commissioner Wagoner asked if there was a correlation between class size and students that graduated. Dr. Benfield reported that he did not research data from that approach but that all data indicates that students with higher achievement have a higher graduating rate.

BOE member, Joe Dezern, commented that smaller class sizes are more effective in lower grades. A smaller number of students allows for a variety of assignments, develops better critical thinking skills, provides for individual attention, and allows a greater turnaround in graded material. Mr. Dezern added that a teacher's methods and abilities are also a factor.

Commissioner Candidate, Kevin Austin, asked how the middle schools would affect classroom availability at the elementary schools and what is the anticipated use of the mobile units after middle school construction. Mr. McDonald reported that each elementary school is completing an evaluation of their classroom space. It appears that there will not be a great deal of excess space because the elementary schools have been using non-traditional areas such as multi-purpose rooms and gymnasiums as classrooms. There continues to be discussion of the mobile units and how many of those will still be required.

BOC Vice Chair, Joel Cornelius, asked about the anticipated growth in each area of the County. Mr. McDonald reported that the growth rate is under the projected amounts. On a side note, the anticipated student population for Forbush Middle School is 520 and 380 for Starmount Middle School.

#### **■ MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

Construction:

Yadkin County Schools Maintenance Director, Donald Hawks, gave construction updates for the new middle schools. Mr. Hawks reported that several buildings on the Starmount Middle School campus are underway with concrete pads, steel beams, plumbing, and electrical work. Grading continues at the Forbush Middle School campus. There were several inquiries regarding the construction deadline and the projected opening of the new middle schools. Mr. Hawks remarked that Starmount Middle School remains on schedule. Regarding Forbush Middle School, school officials simply stated that construction continues, that progress will be monitored on a regular basis, and that no concessions have been made for a delayed opening.

Curriculum:

Dr. Benfield provided a list of planned curriculum areas including core classes, electives, and extra-curricular activities. Rick Swain, current Principal of Jonesville Elementary and the selected Principal for Starmount Middle School explained that most electives would be offered on a daily basis. Dr. Benfield reported that the Sertoma Club will continue to sponsor the football program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Yadkin County Schools is currently pursuing an available conference for middle school sports. Mr. McDonald added that this would include all sports. BOC Vice Chair Cornelius asked how students were being identified for the various electives. School officials reported that the guidance departments of each school are assisting with selections.

**[Curriculum Data for Forbush and Starmount Middle Schools is attached as Addendum B]**

#### Budget:

The 2009-2010 Projected Operating Budget for Forbush Middle School and Starmount Middle School was presented. Dr. Benfield asked that the Board review and determine an operating budget by mid-winter. In addition, Dr. Benfield asked that the Board not reduce the elementary and high school budgets to accommodate the middle school budget. BOC Vice Chair Cornelius questioned the amount of funds projected for custodians. Vice Chair Cornelius suggested that contracting custodial services will result in much less cost on an annual basis. Vice Chair Cornelius asked that the Board of Education seek bids for custodial services and review that data for cost comparisons. Commissioner Garner questioned the projected costs for maintenance and cost of grounds keeping equipment. Mr. Hawks explained that contracted groundskeepers are typically responsible for large areas only and that landscaped areas near the buildings and entrances are managed by school personnel and would require equipment. Commissioner Garner avidly questioned the amount of one-time expenses projected for this type of equipment. Commissioner Garner also questioned the projected amount for floor care equipment. Mr. Hawks responded that the majority of flooring for both schools is tile and will require weekly maintenance at a minimum.

### **[2009-2010 Projected Operating Budget for Forbush and Starmount Middle Schools is attached as Addendum C]**

#### ■ 2009-2010 DISTRICT BUDGET

Dr. Benfield discussed the 2009-2010 budget. Dr. Benfield made reference to the use of fund balance to cover operating expenses in the previous budget years. Dr. Benfield assured the Board that the upcoming projected budget would only reflect what was necessary to operate Yadkin County Schools.

#### ■ RESOLUTION TO DOT

DOT officials have suggested the Board of Commissioners adopt a resolution requesting funding for road construction and traffic flow for the new middle schools. The Board of Education will draft a resolution for Board of Commissioners and present this at a subsequent meeting.

#### ■ STATE TEST SCORES

The Board of Education shared student performance results from 2007-2008. Discussion included North Carolina End of Grade Testing, Initial Adequate Yearly Progress, and No Child Left Behind. Assistant Superintendent, Mark Rumley, explained that End of Grade Reading Scores from the 2007-2008 are being made available on Friday, October 3. Proficiency standards in math and reading rose in 2007-2008 in grades 3-8. Yadkin County SAT scores also increased.

### **[Yadkin County Schools Performance Report for State Tests and Goals is attached as Addendum D]**

#### ■ FORBUSH HUNTER SAFETY

Representatives from the National Rifle Association are reviewing plans and the site for the new Forbush High School Shooting Range. The insurance carrier noted some requirements for coverage. The National Rifle Association will give final approval of the site.

#### ■ OTHER ITEMS

BOE Vice Chair McKnight announced that the Board of Education would meet in regular session on Monday, October 6, 2008 at 9:00am. The Board would then travel to Starmount High School for lunch followed by a tour of the Starmount Middle School construction site. Vice Chair McKnight invited all Board of Commissioner members to attend. Vice Chair McKnight inquired about the scheduled joint meeting for December to be hosted by the Board of Commissioners. As this falls around the Christmas holidays, Chair Phillips replied that any change in the schedule would be reported to the Board of Education.

Commissioner Wooten reported that the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council is inviting the Board of Commissioners, the Board of Education, and all community leaders to attend a meeting at the Rescue Squad building on October 28, 2008 from 9:00am to 12:00pm. The purpose of the meeting is to increase awareness of gang activity in the community and schools.

BOC Vice Chair Cornelius asked the Board of Education to consider a standard mode of dress for the new middle schools. Vice Chair Cornelius offered that standard dress would reduce cliques, improve learning, and reduce obstacles. BOC Chair Phillips agreed with Vice Chair Cornelius. Chair Phillips added that standard dress works as an equalizer for all students of any socio-economic background. Chair Phillips also encouraged the Board of Education to consider implementing a standard dress policy.

Commissioner Garner inquired about the tennis courts at both high schools. Mr. McDonald reported that there are structural issues with both courts but that those issues are unrelated.

Commissioner Garner asked the Board of Education to be responsible with their funding of the new middle schools and not duplicate equipment or services that are already funded.

BOE member, Larry Vestal commented that this was his first joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Vestal appreciated the open exchange between Boards. Mr. Vestal added that it is important that cuts are not made in areas that directly effect education.

## **ADJOURN**

No further business for discussion.

Rex Baity made a motion to adjourn the Yadkin County Board of Education. Dr. Hazel Brown second.

Vote: 6/0

**Vice Chair Cornelius made a motion to adjourn the Yadkin County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Wagoner second.**

**Vote: 5/0**

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Prepared by Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

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Date Approved by the  
Yadkin County Board of Commissioners